The impact of coalition agreements on the legislative process

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Introduction

Since parties in multiparty systems only rarely win majority on their own, coalition governments have always been of great interest to political scientist as well as journalists and voters. Especially the formation and termination of government coalitions have received great attention since the seminal publication of William Riker, *The Theory of Political Coalitions* in 1962. The process of policymaking by coalition governments between their births and deaths has, however, received less attention (Thies, 2001: 580; Martin, 2004: 13; Timmermans, 2006; Muller, Bergman & Strøm, 2008:9). This is remarkable since policy – or law-making – is the key activity of governing parties. We do not only care about whom wins office but also the jobs carried out in office. Hence, law-making is crucial for governing parties, but at the same time, it poses a serious challenge to coalition governments because the cabinet parties are likely to differ in policy positions and also in relation to the importance they ascribe to different issues (Saalfeld, 2008: 169). Hence, parties that govern together do not necessarily stand together on policies, and therefore, policymaking is a challenge and potential threat to coalition governments (Timmermans, 2006).

Recently, the literature on coalition governance has made huge steps forward in contributing to our understanding of how coalition governments actually govern and manage to stay together. More coalition coordination devices have been studied: junior ministers (Thies, 2001), collective responsibility (Andeweg, 2000), decisional rules (Laver & Shepsle, 1994), and coalition agreements (Strøm & Müller, 1999; Timmermans, 2006; Timmermans & Moury, 2006; Müller & Strøm, 2008). In relation to the law-making of coalition governments, especially the coalition agreement is of interest since coalition agreements first and foremost decide the policy program of the government (Timmermans, 2006). This means that the coalition agreement is the
policy declaration of the united government to which it commits itself internally as well as externally. Bills initiated by the coalition agreements may therefore have a special status that can affect the law-making process related to these bills (De Winter, 2004). Hence, the very basic research question of this paper is as follows: How do coalition agreements impact on the legislative process? The answer to this question is important to our further study and understanding of the role of coalition agreements in coalition governance. If the fact that a bill is initiated by the formulation of the coalition agreement influences the way of this bill through the legislative body, it becomes crucial for coalition parties to secure that their key issues are included in the coalition agreement, and we can then be more confident that the most important issues of the coalition parties will be found in the coalition agreement. The answer to the question is also important to our understanding of government strength vis-à-vis the parliament. If, by formulating a coalition agreement, the government can influence not only the parliamentary agenda but also the law-making process of the parliament, it will be a sign of even stronger government domination over the law-making process in parliamentary democracies.

The research question will be investigated in a least likely case, Denmark. Danish governments are weak in the sense that they are often in minority, and the parliament to a large extent controls the law-making process by having the president of the Folketing set the timetable of the parliamentary debates and with the government having almost no control over the timetables in legislative committees. In combination with the fact that bills die at the end of the session (one year), putting the government under strong time pressure compared to many other countries, these factors make Danish governments least likely to control the law-making process (Döring, 1995). So, if coalition agreements – formulated by the government – do indeed influence the law-making process in the Danish parliament, we would expect this also to be the
case in other countries with even stronger governments. The analyses are based on 1751 laws made by three different Danish governments of varying strength. Based on this dataset, we are able to estimate when bills were proposed, how long it took for them to be enacted, how many questions were asked in relation to the processing of the bills, and how every party voted in the final vote. Hence, we are able to follow the legislative process from proposal to law in 1751 cases.

The paper proceeds with a section on how we could expect coalition agreements to influence the law-making process, spelling out the specific elements in the law-making process that the coalition agreement could affect. In the following section, the research design and operationalization are presented and discussed. Next, the analyses are conducted and the results discussed before we make our conclusion that inclusion in a coalition agreement seems to impact the process of a law with more opposition activity and bloc voting as well as earlier proposal in a government term and shorter procession time.

**Coalition agreements and the law-making process**

Studies of coalition governments have mainly focused on coalition formation and termination. However, ‘one of the most obvious questions to be asked about coalition governments is, what these governments do’ (Timmermans, 2006: 263). When parties govern together, they face a whole range of potential serious problems, such as the common pool resources problem (Hallerberg, 2004), limited and asymmetrical information, lack of enforceable contracts, hidden action and shirking (Strøm & Müller, 1999; Lupia, 2003), and also non-simultaneity of exchange (Weingast & Marshall, 1988). Even faced with all these potential problems, political parties – who compete on Election Day – actually manage to stay together for longer periods. However,
longevity is not an important characteristic of a government if it does not correlate with the amount and importance of governmental output (Tsebelis, 1995: 84). How coalition governments deal with the serious challenges that face them and how this handling impacts on the policy-making process is the most important question.

One way to try to manage many of the challenges coalition governments face is coalition agreements. Coalition agreements are agreements on policies and sometimes also procedures that are entered into by cabinet parties. From an agenda-setting perspective, coalition agreements set the policy agenda of the government and hereby determines which issues the government should try to promote (and avoid) in its governing period (Timmermans, 2006). From a delegation perspective, the coalition agreement is a contract constraining the behavior of individual cabinet parties and ministers. The contract links cabinet parties horizontally as they represent a policy compromise that all cabinet parties have agreed on. Hence, shirking – if it is detected – will be sanctioned. The contract also constitutes a vertical constraint. As far as the coalition agreement is endorsed by the party organization, it actually constrains all levels of the party from ministers to MPs and ordinary rank-and-file members. Hence, one crucial aspect of coalition agreements is that they regulate relations both between and within parties (Moury, 2010; Strøm & Müller, 1999; Müller & Strøm, 2008).

The importance of coalition agreements is, however, disputed. Scholars have argued that since it is irrational for political leaders and coalition parties to publicize intra-coalitional conflict and make compromises reached through coalition bargaining even more binding, public coalition agreements can only be analyzed as symbolic documents without important substantial content (Luebbert, 1986: 68-69; Laver & Schofield, 1990: 191-92). Others argue that coalition agreements do have important implications as they govern the relationship between coalition
parties and reduce the risk of agency loss in the delegation from parties to ministers (Strøm & Müller, 1999; Müller & Strøm, 2008; Moury, 2010).

Empirical evidence shows that a majority of the pledges made in coalition agreements are transferred into cabinet decisions (Moury & Timmermans, 2006; Moury, 2010), that coalition agreements are related to inter-party conflict (Timmermans, 2006; Christiansen, forthcoming), and that they are good indicators of which issues will be dealt with in the government period (Walgrave et al., 2006). Hence, so far, evidence suggests that coalition agreements are not merely symbolic papers but substantial significant policy documents designed to facilitate inter-party cooperation and chart the policy course of the government.

From the above-cited empirical work on coalition agreements, it is clear that focus has primarily been directed either at intra-coalitional questions such as conflict management (Moury & Timmermans, 2006; Timmermans, 2006; Saalfeld, 2008) and intra-coalitional constrains (Moury, 2010) or at accountability: To what extent do governments do as they promise in their coalition agreement (Timmermans, 2003)? However, the impact of coalition agreements on the actual legislative process in parliament is almost neglected, with De Winter (2004) as an important exception.

Actually, the formulation of a coalition agreement is not only essential for the beginning of a new government (De Winter, 2004: 36) but also for the beginning of a new parliamentary term. As government declarations, coalition agreements are likely to influence the legislative process in which the opposition and government face each other. Government ascribes prestige to the enactment of its coalition agreement and will probably take full credit for it. The opposition will, on the other hand, have a particular interest in obstructing the enactment of the coalition agreement in order to make the government seem less capable. In this sense, the
coalition agreement not only sets the agenda for cooperating within the government but also for competition between the government and the opposition. Following this claim, more testable hypotheses can be deduced about how coalition agreements may influence various elements of the legislative process. Generally, we expect laws mentioned in a coalition agreement to be prioritized by both government and opposition respectively trying to promote or obstruct the process.

The first hypothesis states that the bills initiated in the coalition agreement are more comprehensive. By comprehensive we mean more salient in terms of changing status quo. For instance, a small change to an existing law is less comprehensive than a new, important law, and laws leading to larger economic or political changes in society are more comprehensive than laws leading to less significant changes. This hypothesis is not directly related to the legislative process, but it is plausible that the comprehensiveness of a bill influences the legislative processing of this bill, and therefore, it is of importance if coalition agreement-based bills are more comprehensive than bills not included in the coalition agreement. Coalition agreement-based bills are expected to be more comprehensive in terms of how much they reform existing laws as prestigious government reforms are expected to be included in the coalition agreement and also likely to foster major rather than minor changes to status quo.

**H1** Bills mentioned in the coalition agreement are more comprehensive.

Since the coalition agreement can be seen as the agenda for competition between government and opposition, especially the enactment of coalition agreement-based bills constitute a success for the government, and therefore, we expect the opposition to be especially intense in the
processing of coalition agreement-based bills. In order not to let the government seem too victorious, parties in opposition will try to obstruct the enactment of bills mentioned in the coalition agreement, either by forcing the government to withdraw the bill, to win concessions on the content of the bill, or at least to make all the drawbacks of the bill visible to the public by for instance forcing the government to answer (unpleasant) questions.

Whereas opposition parties may offer support in exchange for policy influence on other bills, bills announced in the coalition agreement will induce the opposition parties to protest, not only because of the content of the bill but also as a basic oppositional strategy of hurting the government (De Winter, 2004: 43-44). Furthermore, the government is also likely to be less willing to offer compromises in relation to coalition agreement-based bills. Renegotiations of the coalition agreement poses intra-coalitional risks in the form of shirking or rebellion, and the government may also have a vote-seeking interest in taking full ownership over the policy programs related to the coalition agreement. Therefore – following the basic claim that coalition agreements not only set the agenda for coalition government cooperation but also for the conflict between parties in and out of government – we expect the final vote on coalition agreement-based bills to resemble the basic logic of opposition-government-conflict and result in majority versus minority bloc voting. Hence, we hypothesize as follows:

H2 Bills mentioned in coalition agreements are likely to be met with more objections from the opposition in the legislative process.

H3 Bills mentioned in coalition agreements will lead to confrontations between the majority and the minority blocs in the final vote.
Further, we argue that the government will try to rush coalition agreement-based bills through the legislative body. It will do so for three reasons: First the coalition agreement constitutes an intra-coalitional constraining device, and as such, coalition agreement-based bills are lifeblood for the government. Nevertheless, the compromises made in coalition agreements constitute a vulnerable equilibrium (Timmermans, 2006: 265). Too much public debate and conversations with external actors may result in majority MPs rebelling and thereby increase the risk of a coalition breakdown (De Winter, 2004: 43-4). Therefore, in order not to jeopardize the compromise stroked in a coalition agreement, the government will try to enact the bill at an early stage and as fast as possible.

Second, time is scarce in modern parliaments (Becker & Saalfeld, 2004: 57). Therefore, governments will seek to rush bills through parliament to move on with their legislative program. This is especially important in relation to the coalition agreement, which is the legislative program the government has promised the voters to enact.

Finally, because governments are eager to enact their main policy programs stated in the coalition agreement, they will try to propose coalition agreement-based bills sooner rather than later in order to increase the chances of getting the bill through parliament in time. Moreover, even though coalition parties need to be patient in order for their issues to be enacted, a coalition leader is wise not to let parties wait too long. If coalition parties are not rewarded within reasonable time compared to their coalition partners, it may lead to opportunistic behavior (Timmermans, 2006: 280). Hence, timing is not only a practical problem but also an intra-coalitional matter. In line with this logic, we expect as follows:
H4 Bills mentioned in coalition agreements are proposed to the legislative body early in the legislative term.

H5 Bills mentioned in the coalition agreement will be processed faster in the legislative body.

The fifth hypothesis deserves one further comment. The expectation is actually unclear since opposite forces are active. The government will try to rush the bill through parliament as stated above, but at the same time, the expected comprehensiveness of coalition agreement-based bills and the intensified opposition should extend the legislative process. Hence, whether or not the legislative process is faster in the case of coalition agreement-based laws depends on the relative strength of the two opposing forces.

**Research design and data**

As described in the introduction, the hypotheses outlined above will be tested in a least likely case, Denmark. Single case studies always suffer from the lack of generalizability. However, by choosing a least likely case, we try to be as certain as possible that the possible effects of coalition agreements we find in Denmark could also be found in countries in which coalition agreements could be expected to have even better circumstances for influencing the legislative process.¹ Denmark is a least likely case because Danish governments are comparatively weak. First, Danish governments are mostly minority governments with or without stable support in parliament. From 1945 to 1999, 13 out of 32 Danish governments were minority coalition governments (Strøm et al., 2008: 8). After 1982, all Danish governments have been coalitions.

¹ Since 1993, coalition agreements have been issued regularly.
and only one has had majority status. The parliament, on the other hand, is comparatively strong. The plenary agenda of the chamber is set by the president of the parliament, who is independent of the government. Danish parliamentary committees are also influential in terms of the legislative process. All bills are referred to committees before the final vote, the timetables for the committees’ discussions are set by the committees themselves, and the government – even with the support of a parliamentary majority – cannot reallocate the bill to another committee (Döring, 1995: 654-687). Hence, the committees are able to drag out the legislative process.

The measurement of the main independent variable, whether or not a specific bill is included in the coalition agreement, is based on the coding of 1751 passed laws. The laws are coded in the following way. First, the coalition agreements were read carefully, and all subjects and promises listed. Very general statements or promises – such as ‘in every decision we make we will take the environment into consideration’ (Coalition agreement, 1998 – our translation) – were left out as they were too difficult to code in a reliable manner. Second, it was determined whether each enacted law was included in the coalition agreement based on the law text, the resume of the law, and the presentation of the law. The clearest evidence was if it was mentioned that a law was a direct implementation of the coalition agreement, but unfortunately, this was rare. Rather, the decision had to be based on the coder’s judgment. We obtained coding of satisfactory reliability (kappa>0.7).

2 In 1993-94, a majority coalition government was formed. At times, the government parties only controlled 89 out of 179 seats, but in these situations, an independent member of the Folketing had publicly declared support to the government.

3 Most laws passed in Denmark are proposed by the government. Unless a legislative session is interrupted by a general election, most government bills are also passed, unlike bills proposed by members of the opposition. Therefore, we do not consider it problematic to restrict our analysis to the passed laws.
The laws were passed by three governments of varying strength. The first government, from 1993 to 1994, is the only majority coalition government, led by the Social Democrats in coalition with three minor center parties. The government was a center government with three parties to its right and one party to its left.

The second government, led by the Social Democrats in coalition with the Social Liberals, was a weak minority coalition government governing from 1998 to 2001. It was a weak minority government as its primary parliamentary majority included the Red-Green Alliance, an extreme left-wing party whose support could not be taken for granted on cabinet issues. Hence, the parliamentary majority was uncertain and unstable (Strøm, 1990).

The third government, led by the Liberals in coalition with the Conservatives and supported by the Danish People’s Party, was a strong minority coalition government in office from 2005 to 2007. It had much more explicit and well-established relations with its support party (The Danish People’s Party) than the Social Democratic government in 1998 had with its support party (the Read-Green Alliance) (Ibid.).

Regarding the many dependent variables, the operationalization is as follows:
Comprehensiveness is measured by the economic effect of law based on assessments made by the government in the remarks to a bill. The degree of opposition is measured as the number of committee questions asked and consultations called with the minister in relation to the law. Earlier rather than later proposals are simply measured as the date of bill presentation to the parliament related to the date of the government formation; and the fastness of the bill processing is measured as the number of days between presentation and final vote in parliament. Finally, the pattern of conflict related to the final vote is measured as a dummy variable. If a law in its final

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4 Most government bills contain such information. We are interested in any economic effect a proposal may have whether it concerns households, companies or public expenditures. If the effect was below 2 Million DKr, we have coded ‘1’, between 2 Million and 100 Million DKr. ‘2’, and above the 100 Million DKr, we have coded ‘3’. No economic effect, we coded ‘0’. We were able to code for 94 percent of the laws whether a law had an economic effect or not and to assess the magnitude in 89 percent of the cases.
vote was only passed with ‘yes’ votes by parties supporting the government, the bill is coded ‘1’.

We follow Green-Pedersen and Thomsen (2005) when we identify the parties that support the existence of the government, its parliamentary basis. This means that bloc politics refers to situations in which legislation is passed by left- or right-wing parties only and the preferences of the centre parties is based on individual studies of every parliamentary session (ibid:157). Hence, the governing bloc consists of the parties explicitly supporting the government and the opposition bloc consist of the parties that explicitly contest the survival of the government in office. If a law was passed with a ‘yes’ vote by at least one party not in the parliamentary basis, the law is coded ‘0’. This means that ‘1’ indicates a bloc-voting structure in which the government faces opposition whereas ‘0’ indicates a situation in which compromises are struck between opposition and government. All information used to measure these variables is found on the website of the Danish parliament (www.ft.dk).

In Christiansen and Pedersen (2011), we find evidence that the strength of the government impacts the content of the coalition agreement. Therefore, we control for government strength by including dummy variables for the three governments included in the analyses.

Analyses

The analyses we need to conduct in order to test the hypotheses outlined above stand out since, in contrast to most studies, we investigate the impact of a single primary independent variable on several dependent variables. However, several bivariate analyses will not do as genuine tests since these dependent variables may be in causal relationships to each other, and we have to be sure that the impacts of coalition agreements we find are not spurious. For instance, the
comprehensiveness of a bill may influence the time needed for the parliament to process this bill, and the number of questions asked may drag out the legislative process. Hence, we will proceed by conducting bivariate and multivariate regression analyses to illuminate the impact of coalition agreements on the legislative process.

First, we test the hypothesis stating that laws mentioned in the coalition agreement are on average more comprehensive than other laws. 69.5 per cent of all laws mentioned in coalition agreements had an economic effect whereas it was the case for 58.5 per cent of the laws not mentioned in the coalition agreement. 41.5 per cent of the laws mentioned in the coalition agreement had an estimated economic effect above 100 Million DKr. compared to 23.8 per cent of the laws not mentioned. Hence, the data supports this first expectation, H1.

Second, we test how the competition between the opposition and the government is influenced by bills being included in the coalition agreement. Table 1 shows the results of analyses testing the impact of coalition agreements on the number of questions asked in relation to the legislative process of the bill in parliament and the impact on the structure of the final vote on the bills.

The mean number of questions asked in relation to bills included in the coalition agreement is 13.9 compared to the mean number of 9.1 questions asked in relation to bills not included in the coalition agreement, and Table 1 shows that there is a statistically significant
positive relationship between a bill being included in the coalition agreement and the number of questions asked, also after control for the possible impact of the comprehensiveness of a law and the government strength. Comprehensiveness – economic magnitude – also has a positive and significant impact on the number of questions asked, which – not surprisingly – indicates that parliaments scrutinize comprehensive laws more thoroughly than less comprehensive laws.

There is a positive and slightly significant difference between the majority government and the minority government with tight relations to its support party, whereas the weak minority government – with not so well-established relations to its support parties – is faced with significantly fewer questions. This may be because weak minority governments are more likely to use a compromising strategy when they build majorities, which means that parties in opposition are more frequently offered influence and not merely left to pose questions (Christiansen & Pedersen, 2011).

Table 1 about here

Among the bills included in the coalition agreement, 22.6 percent are enacted by bloc majorities whereas only 9.8 percent of the bills not included in the coalition agreements are enacted by bloc majorities. Table 1 shows an almost perfect positive relationship between bills being included in the coalition agreement and the bloc structure of the final vote. The comprehensiveness of the law also has a significant impact on the final vote whereas both minority governments are less likely to enact bills based on blocs compared to the majority government. This is in accordance with earlier findings (Christiansen & Pedersen, 2011).

    Hence, the data supports the hypotheses (H2 and H3) that coalition agreements not only initiate the cooperation between governing parties but also the competition between government and opposition. Bills included in coalition agreements are met with more questions in the
parliamentary reading and are more often enacted by a firm coalition of parties constituting the parties that support the government. Hence, the readings of bills included in coalition agreements are based on the basic competition between government and opposition over office.

The next tests relate to the timing of the legislative process. We expected bills included in the coalition agreement to be proposed to parliament early in a government term and that the time from proposal to final vote in parliament is shorter in the case of coalition agreement-based bills. Table 2 shows the results of these tests. First, we see that laws mentioned in the coalition agreement were indeed proposed to parliament earlier than laws included in the coalition agreement. The dependent variable – time of proposal – is measured as the number of days between government investiture and the day the bill was proposed to parliament, and therefore, the negative coefficient indicates that bills included in coalition agreements were presented closer to the government investiture than bills not included in the coalition agreement. We also note that comprehensive laws that may take longer to prepare did not have any impact on how soon after investiture the bill was proposed to parliament. However, the minority governments propose its bills significantly later than the majority government, whether they have a support party or not and, like we should expect, this delaying effect is strongest in the absence of a support party.

Table 2 about here

Table 2 also provides some support for the hypothesis that bills included in the coalition agreement are processed faster in parliament compared to bills not included in the coalition agreement. There is a negative relationship between bills being mentioned in coalition
agreements and the time used between proposal and final vote, though we must note that this is only significant with p=0.068. This relationship exists after controlling for the impact of questions asked and government strength. Opposition protests tend to drag out the process since the coefficient is positive, but still, governments tend to be successful in speeding up the process when it comes to bills included in the coalition agreement. Bills included in the coalition agreement are underway in parliament for fewer days than bills not included in the coalition agreement (67 days compared to 75 days). The small difference may be due to the intensified protests of the opposition. If we control for this, we find more clearly that governments are able to run bills included in the coalition agreement faster through parliament compared to bills met with the same number of protests but not included in the coalition agreement. There is no significant difference between the majority government and the two minority governments. We also have to notice that we are only able to explain less than one percent of the variation in procession time, hence, the model must be underspecified. Institutional factors may offer explanatory power. In the Danish case bills are usually enacted in June right before the summer break or in relation to the enactment of the budget right before Christmas. Hence, institutional factors seem to guide the legislative process and this may be the reason for the only minor impact of the independent variables included in this analysis.

Conclusion

The analyses provide support for our argument that inclusion of a bill in a coalition agreement affects how it is processed through parliament due to both government and opposition giving high priority to these bills. For the opposition, this means asking more questions and opposing
the passing of the bill in the final vote, and for the government, it means trying to introduce the law and process the law as soon and as fast as possible. Our analyses support all of these expectations, and the relations are strongly significant with procession time as an exception. Our study also shows that laws mentioned in coalition agreements are not primarily minor matters but also comprehensive. When controlling for this comprehensiveness, as well as for government strength, we still find support for our argument about the effect of coalition agreements.

The impact of coalition agreements on law-making indicates that coalition agreements are more than symbolic gestures but that they are essential for how legislatures work, and that relations between government and opposition are guided by it. We also find some support that coalition governments are indeed able to influence the legislative process by agreeing on a policy program ex ante.

Our study has been based on 1761 laws enacted by three governments in one country, Denmark. Due to frequent minority governments, and relatively limited formal government powers concerning the legislative process, this country fulfills a least-likely assumption. This increases the likelihood that the empirical results and the basic argument that coalition agreements not only set the agenda for intra-coalition cooperation but also for conflict between government and opposition, which means that the legislative process of bills mentioned in coalition agreements have certain characteristics, can be generalized. Nevertheless, comparative studies are needed to confirm this.
Literature


Moury and Timmermans (2006)


Table 1 The impact of coalition agreements on questions asked and bloc voting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of questions</th>
<th>Bloc-voting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law mentioned in coalition agreement</td>
<td>0.075 **</td>
<td>0.634***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnitude of economic effect</td>
<td>0.159***</td>
<td>0.283***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority government</td>
<td>REF</td>
<td>REF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority government with support</td>
<td>0.067(*)</td>
<td>-0.735***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority government without support</td>
<td>-0.179***</td>
<td>-1.528***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$/Nagelkerke $R^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>1482</td>
<td>1552</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Reports standardized coefficients based on OLS regression
2 Reports coefficients based on binary logistic regression
Note: (*) p<0.1, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001 in two-sided tests

Table 2 The impact of coalition agreements on bill proposal and legislative process. Standardized coefficients of OLS regression analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Time of proposal</th>
<th>Procession time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law mentioned in coalition agreement</td>
<td>-0.125***</td>
<td>-0.049(*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnitude of economic effect</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>-0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of questions asked</td>
<td>REF</td>
<td>0.096***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority government</td>
<td>REF</td>
<td>REF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority government with support</td>
<td>0.143***</td>
<td>0.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minority government without support</td>
<td>0.484***</td>
<td>-0.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>1552</td>
<td>1481</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Measured as the number of days between government investiture and date of bill proposal to parliament.
2 Measured as the number of days between proposal date and the date of the final vote on the bill in parliament

Note: (*) p<0.1, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001 in two-sided-tests